

COMBINATION DISPLAY FRAME

Background of the Invention

Field of the Invention

The present invention relates in general to a display frame and, more specifically, to a frame which displays more than one piece of art or image, at least one of which is provided back lighting.

Description of the Prior Art

It is known in the art to frame pictures, paintings and other two-dimensional art using matting, backing and a decorative frame. It is also not uncommon for some three-dimensional pieces to be mounted and displayed in a frame-like setting. Some of these display frames include a glass or other protective and transparent surface between the art and the viewer, others do not. It is also known in the art to provide a framing apparatus wherein more than one piece of art may be displayed simultaneously. Finally, as art galleries have done for years, it is known in the art to provide lighting for art which is framed. Often, the lighting is in the form of a detachable light bar which is attached to the top of the frame and positioned to provide light to the front of the artwork. Sometimes this kind of light bar is attached at the bottom of the frame, shining up and toward the art.

The present invention differs from the above referenced inventions and others similar in that these prior devices do not contemplate providing a picture display frame for multiple pieces of art wherein back lighting is provided internally for at least one of the pieces.

The first objective of the present invention is to provide a display frame in which more than one piece of art is displayed at a time.

The second objective of the present invention is to provide a display frame in which at least one of the pieces of art is provided with a back lighting source.

The third objective of the present invention is to provide a display frame in which more than one piece of art is displayed simultaneously, the pieces are complimentary to one another, and at least one is provided with lighting.

The fourth objective of the present invention is to provide a display frame where the art pieces are similar to one another and at least one is of at least partially transparent material for which back lighting is provided.

Summary of the Invention

The present invention provides a display frame for mounting at least one piece of art with one or more light sources imbedded within the elements of the frame for lighting at least one piece of art from the back. Power may be supplied to each of the light sources either through conventional plug-in method or by battery pack. Preferably, a switch for turning the light source on and off is located on the frame's outer periphery.

In the preferred embodiment, a generally conventional framing apparatus including a frame member, a matte, and backing is employed. The matte is cut such that a photo and its transparency (or slide) can be displayed through it. The backing is then also cut such that the back of the transparency is not obscured. A light source such as a light panel of dimensions generally equal to the transparency is then located just behind the

transparency so that, when actuated, the transparency is back lit. Means to secure the light source in position is provided along with a way to access the source for replacement of batteries or bulbs or repair as necessary. Finally, circuitry from the light source to the switch is provided such that the light source can be located anywhere on a back side of the frame and a switch can still be conveniently provided on the frame's outer periphery.

Other objects, features, and advantages of the present invention will be readily appreciated from the following description. The description makes reference to the accompanying drawings, which are provided for illustration of the preferred embodiment. However, such embodiment does not represent the full scope of the invention. The subject matter which the inventor does regard as his invention is particularly pointed out and distinctly claimed in the claims at the conclusion of this specification.

Brief Description of the Drawings

Fig. 1 is a perspective view of the preferred embodiment of the display frame of the present invention;

Fig. 2 is an exploded view of the display frame showing each element in its relative position;

Fig. 3 is a back view of the display frame showing the matting and the art pieces;

Fig. 4 is a back view of the display frame showing the backing and the light source mounted in the backing; and

Fig. 5 is a perspective view of the light source of the preferred embodiment.

Detailed Description of the Preferred Embodiment

The present invention shown in Figs. 1 and 2 is a combination display frame shown generally at 10 comprising an outer periphery 12, a matte 14, backing means 16, light means 18, and at least two pieces of art 19. In the preferred embodiment, said at least two pieces of art 19 comprise a at least partially transparent piece of art 20, and a generally opaque piece of art 22 with an outer perimeter 23. Said matte 14 and said backing 16 are of the same general shape as said periphery 12 but of slightly smaller dimension.

Said matte 14 further comprises a first opening 30 of generally the same shape but of slightly smaller dimensions than said at least partially transparent piece of art 20 and a second opening 32 of generally the same shape but of slightly smaller dimensions than said generally opaque piece of art 22. Said backing means 16 further comprises a third opening 34, said third opening 34 being of generally the same shape and dimension as said second opening 32 in said matte 14.

As shown in Fig. 3, said at least partially transparent piece of art 20 is secured behind and within said first opening 30 in said matte 14; said generally opaque piece of art 22 is secured behind and within said second opening 32 in said matte 14. Referring back to Fig. 2, the backing means 16 is secured behind said generally opaque piece of art 22 and said at least partially transparent piece of art 20 and said third opening 34 is positioned behind said at least partially transparent piece of art 20 such that light may pass through said at least partially transparent piece of art 20. Said light means 18 is

placed so that it directs light through said third opening 34, said at least partially transparent piece of art 20, and said first opening 30. Means for alternatively actuating said light means 42 to either one of an on-condition or an off-condition is provided. (See Fig. 4) Means for securing said matte 14, said backing 16, and said at least two pieces of art are provided. Said means for securing may include mechanical clamps or an adhesive material or other mechanical or magnetic means, all generally known in the art.

In the preferred embodiment, said light means 18 is a slim light panel and fits directly into said third opening 34 behind said at least partially transparent piece of art 20.

A removable access panel 40 (shown in Fig. 4) is provided which detachably secures said light means 18 in place. Said removable access panel 40 may include latching means 41. Also in the preferred embodiment, means for alternatively actuating said light means

42 is a switch that is preferably associated with said outer periphery 12 and connected to said light panel 18 by wire 44.

The art pieces of the preferred embodiment are aesthetically reflective of one another. For example, an enlarged photo and its negative, or a painting and a negative of a photo of the picture, or a photo and a transparent version of the same photo would all be reflective sets. In addition, a group of images of a single subject, seen from various perspectives or portrayed in different lights or seasons are also examples of reflective sets. The degree of transparency of any at least partially transparent pieces of art 20 can be varied for aesthetic appeal; the relative sizes of the generally opaque 22 and at least

partially transparent

20 pieces may also vary according to the artist's desire.

An outside piece of transparent material 50 and an inside piece of transparent material 52 such as acrylic may be associated with said at least partially transparent piece 20 to provide protection for said at least partially transparent piece 20. Together the transparent materials 50 and 52 form a sandwich style display with the at least partially transparent piece 20.

As disclosed, said backing means 16 may be transparent and larger than said matte 14 and said matte 14 may be protected by transparent protective means 58 such as acrylic or glass the same size as said backing means 16. In this arrangement, the combination display frame 10 has transparent portions which overlap said matte 14. Once again, means for securing all in relationship 53 with one another may include the above-mentioned items. However, the preferred embodiment also includes two short frame members 54 and two long frame members 56 which are positioned adjacent to said outer periphery 12 to form a traditional, rectangular shaped frame. Said two short frame members 54 and said two long frame members 56 may be used as means for securing said matte, said backing means, said at least two art pieces and said light source in secured relationship 53 along with any of the aforementioned materials and may also serve as a decorative border.

Thus, the present invention has been described in an illustrative manner. It is to be understood that the terminology that has been used is intended to be in the nature of words of description rather than of limitation.

Many modifications and variations of the present invention are possible in light of

the above teachings. For example, there may be included more than one at least partially transparent pieces of art and, consequently, more than one light source. The display frame may be of the traditional type including a rectangular shape and framing pieces or it may comprise more non-traditional types such as an acrylic or otherwise transparent shape that provides the outer periphery. The light source may be a simple bulb and circuit rather than a light panel. It may be that there are more than two pieces of art displayed in the frame; and it may be that one or more of the art pieces are three-dimensional. Therefore, within the scope of the appended claims, the present invention may be practiced otherwise than as specifically described.